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DMR Announces New Round of Working Waterfront Protection Funding

With \$3 million additional dollars approved by the voters as part of the Natural Resources Bond package this past November, the Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) is pleased to announce the continued availability of funds to help purchase, preserve and protect strategically significant coastal properties that provide access for and support Maine's commercial fishing activities. DMR's Working Waterfront Access Pilot Program (WWAPP) provides monies through a competitive application process in the form of matching grants to commercial fisheries businesses, municipalities, non-profits, co-ops, and others with waterfront land that provides access and support critical to the ongoing activities of our commercial fisheries.

In an effort to assist those interested in bringing projects forward, DMR has created a Working Waterfront Team at Coastal Enterprises, INC (CEI) to work with potential applicants to assure their projects fit the program criteria and to guide them through the process of completing their project. The competitive process requires all applications be reviewed during pre-established review periods. Applications submitted before May 15th, 2008 will be scored and reviewed and presented for allocation approval at the July meeting of the Land for Maine's Future Board. The next deadline for review will be September 15th, 2008.

Program materials have been revised and are available on the program website www.wwapp.org or by contacting the DMR's Working Waterfront Team at CEI at 207-772-5356.

The WWAPP seeks to work with commercial fisheries businesses including commercial fishermen, aquaculturists, individuals and businesses providing direct services to commercial fishermen and aquaculturists, fishermen's cooperatives and municipal and private piers and wharves operated to provide waterfront access to commercial fishermen and aquaculturists. Financial awards may be available for projects that include land used for walk-in and small boat access for worming, clamming and similar harvesting activities, property dedicated entirely to commercial fisheries use, or mixed use properties where the portion used to support commercial fishing business can be clearly delineated and its use secured. There is a strong program preference for projects that protect and secure the use of existing, established fishing facilities and access sites over projects that might involve development of new access sites and facilities.